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STATE OF INDIANA

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

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INDIANA OBSERVES NATIONAL PREPAREDNESS MONTH

IDHS highlights community response program

Indianapolis – The Indiana Department of Homeland Security (IDHS) is observing National Preparedness Month by promoting the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program. IDHS hopes to raise the level of awareness of CERT by erecting billboards and placing nearly 216,000 inserts in newspapers statewide.

"Our three main goals during National Preparedness Month are to educate Hoosiers on CERT, enlist Hoosiers to volunteer for CERT, and encourage all Indiana counties to participate in CERT," said J. Eric Dietz, Executive Director of IDHS.

CERT is a nationwide volunteer program that trains individuals to prepare and respond to emergencies in their own communities. Team members receive training in disaster preparedness, fire suppression, basic medical operations, team operations and light search and rescue. In Indiana, there are over 1,200 CERT volunteers, including 300 certified CERT trainers.

"We are best prepared to tackle an emergency when people at the most local level are ready to respond," added Dietz. "CERT is a tremendous tool designed to tap local talent to aid their fellow citizens in a time of need."

The Indiana Homeland Security Grant program funds CERT in Indiana counties signed up to participate. At present, 47 counties participate in the program.

September marks the second annual observation of National Preparedness Month in the United States. During the month, organizations across the country will work to educate citizens on how to prepare for emergencies in their homes, schools and businesses.

Governor Daniels also recognized National Preparedness Month by proclaiming September Hoosier Preparedness Month in Indiana.

To learn more about CERT, visit IDHS' website at www.in.gov/dhs. To learn more about National Preparedness Month and how to prepare for an emergency, visit www.ready.gov, www.redcross.org or www.citizenscorp.gov.

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